

Heche confirms her new baby is a boy



Metro has all that you need to know pg 6

Ticket issued in death of student

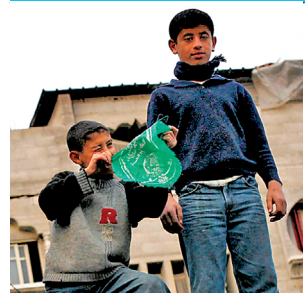
CRASH RCMP have handed a 55-year-old Aulds Cove, Antigonish Co., driver a \$164.50 ticket after the Jan. 5 accident that killed a Saint Francis Xavier student.

Robyn Marie Peddle, 19, of Newfoundland and Labrador, died when a car turning left off Highway 104 into a driveway hit her vehicle.

Sharon Bouchie was ticketed for failing to yield when making a left turn on a highway. **METRO HALIFAX**

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- Ex-pats excited for special day, page 3
- Lawrence Martin, page 8
- More exclusive coverage online at metronews.ca



Gaza Strip left in ruins after attacks



Estrogen in moisturizer?

Flight issues to affect Rainmen



U.S. president-elect Barack Obama helps paint the walls at the Sasha Bruce House, a shelter for teens yesterday in Washington, D.C. Obama stopped at Sasha Bruce House to promote his "Day of Service" program. Obama's inauguration is today.

Painting a new American future

Scholars say rude awakening awaits new U.S. leader

Redemption for America, a clean slate for the world, and the burden of the ages for Barack Obama, who assumes the presidency today with a constellation of expectations and challenges few, if any, have known before.

The Obamania will peak at one minute before 1 p.m., when Barack takes his oath of office today.

America's 44th president will proceed immediately to his crucial first order of business — a 17-minute address that will set the tone for his era.

A succession of polls suggests Obama will enter office with the wind at his back, ensured of a long honeymoon.

United States Presidential Inauguration

But presidential scholars say just hours from now, he will begin to experience the rude awakening inherent to the world's most powerful position.

The inauguration is "a ritual of reaffirmation that combines the worlds of the sacred and the profane — in other words, religion and politics," said Donald Kennon, chief historian with the U.S. Capitol Historical Society.

Behind closed doors, the inaugural balls — 10 official functions sanctioned by the government, dozens more unofficial bashes cre-

ated to bang the gong for a transformative moment in American society — will remind Obama that realpolitik awaits.

Traditionally, the balls are the place for the incoming political elite to encounter corporate backers and major financial supporters. The new ties expected to bind the incoming leader are unfurled for all to see.

"The function of the festival (during the inaugural balls) seems to bring the consecrated one — the president — back down to the grubby secular world of social and political obligations," said Kennon.

Washington, for this one night, will become Hollywood, populated with a

veritable who's who of the celebrity world. Yesterday, a throng of stars — Bono, Mary J. Blige, Will.i.am, Faith Hill and Seal — converged for an Oprah Winfrey national broadcast from the Kennedy Center.

The mantra of change is already evident on the normally vanilla streets of downtown Washington, which is transforming with each passing hour to something more akin to New York City.

Despite the media frenzy framed around the ascent of the first African-American president, Team Obama has strived to underplay the significance of the moment — instead, letting the moment speak for itself. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

Mother Nature tough to figure

PAUL MCLEOD
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WEATHER Mother Nature continued her plan of making as little sense as possible yesterday as another storm caused delays across metro.

After days of bone-shatteringly cold weather, Halifax saw a bit of everything.

There was snow, a 25 F jump in temperature, then rain, then ice covering nearly every surface.

In some parts of the world, this would be seen as a sign of the apocalypse. In Nova Scotia, it wasn't even enough to get most people a day off work.

Schools were closed, but government offices and most businesses remained open.

There were many car accidents — about 20 significant ones between 2 a.m. and 11 a.m. — and police had to close off some steep side streets.

But there were no serious injuries. Halifax Regional Police said most of the accidents involved cars sliding into ditches or each other. Things even went smoothly at the airport.

"There were some cancellations and delays. Not a great deal, but some," said Halifax Airport spokesman Peter Spurway. "This was not a significant event for us."

Environment Canada predicts a mix of sun and cloud today, then another drop in temperature tomorrow, presumably to be followed by raining frogs.

Records

- The largest one-day snowfall in Canada occurred in Fredericton, N.B. on Dec. 4, 1967, with 78.0 cm.
- Coming in second for the largest one-day snowfall is St. John's N.L., on Mar. 10, 1986, with 68.4 cm.
- Halifax came in at a close third when on Feb. 19, 2004, 66.0 cm of snow fell.
- Rounding out the top four is Victoria, B.C., on Dec 29 1996 with 64.5 cm.

Local



Collection day postponed in areas

Was your garbage or compost day yesterday? Due to the weather, the city cancelled collection in many areas, such as the south end of Halifax, Woodlawn, Hammonds Plains, Upper Tantallon, Forest Hills and others. Have your waste out on the curb by 7 a.m. Saturday instead.

METRO HALIFAX

Harper sings from Grits' song sheet

PM 'on same page' with Ignatieff over possible deficit concerns

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RYAN TAPLIN/METRO HALIFAX

Yesterday was balmy in Halifax, but probably freezing in hell – Prime Minister Stephen Harper agreed with the Liberals.

While in Halifax to meet with business leaders, Harper responded to Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff's ultimatums on tax cuts.

Ignatieff said Sunday the Liberals would oppose a budget that includes broad tax cuts that plunge Canada into a "permanent" deficit. Yesterday, Harper — agreed?

"That is obviously a concern that the government of Canada shares," Harper told reporters at the Marriott Harbourfront.

"I think it's a broad consensus that we need ... to engage in significant spending now to stimulate our economy now, but that cannot become permanent. We're all on the same page on that score."

Ignatieff is instead pushing for short-term economic stimulus in the Conservative budget, due on Jan. 27. Harper said he expects the budget will be generally approved of across Canada.

"All the political parties in Parliament don't agree on everything. There are



Prime Minister Stephen Harper answers a question from a reporter yesterday at the Marriott Harbourfront hotel. Harper met with local business leaders as part of a national series of meetings.

certainly broad aspects of what the Liberal party is saying that we can agree with. Beyond that, as you know, the Liberal party has been very general in its wish list for this budget."

Harper was in Halifax on

a national tour, meeting business leaders in the run-up to the budget.

Keeping with his usual theme of limited media availability, Harper took only four questions yesterday. In that time he also wished

incoming U.S. president Barack Obama good luck.

"Coming to office as the first African-American president is a hugely symbolic and important page in American history. That said, none of us are under

any illusions about the great challenges that face President Obama," he said.

"In all the great challenges that confront him, he will find no better friend, neighbour and ally than Canada."

Bus-stop butt ban coming?

RACHEL BOOMER
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POLL Smokers shouldn't be able to light up at the bus stop, says the Canadian Cancer Society — and they say most of us agree.

A poll done by Corporate Research Associates for the society suggests 82 per cent of people in the Halifax area, and 76 per cent of Nova Scotians, would support a bylaw banning smoking near bus stops.

Maureen Summers, head of the society's Nova Scotia division, says smoking kills over 1,700 Nova Scotians per year, and drives 21 per cent of the province's deaths.

In a news release, Summers said banning smoking in high-traffic outdoor areas would help discourage kids and teens from taking up the habit.

Bernie Smith, head of the Spring Garden Road Merchants' Association, has said Spring Garden Road doesn't need a smoking ban. Mayor Peter Kelly didn't return a call from Metro yesterday by press time.

Earlier this month, Truro banned smoking along its main shopping street, Inglis Place. Last year, Bridgewater banned smoking in parks, playgrounds, at concerts and on other town property.

CRA polled 400 adults between Nov. 19 and 30. Results are considered accurate to within 4.9 percentage points, 95 times out of 100.

Appeal begins for controversial development

JENNIFER TAPLIN
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RYAN TAPLIN/METRO HALIFAX

The Waterside development is down, but definitely not out.

The Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board began hearing the matter yesterday. The Waterside development proposes a six-storey glass office building perched on three storeys of heritage buildings on Lower Water Street. It was voted down by city council in the fall, and the premier threatened to veto council's decision.

Developer Armour Group took the matter to the UARB for appeal. A lawyer for Armour said council's disapproval of the project doesn't fit in with their Municipal Planning Strategy.



Crews demolish part of the block where Armour Group wants to build the controversial Waterside Centre development in this file photo from the fall.

The first witness on the stand was Andy Lynch, the architect hired by Armour.

He said his firm has been involved in \$200-million worth of downtown buildings and the Waterside de-

velopment is no different from any other. He used One Government Place as an example of a modern structure mixed with heritage buildings.

"That kind of streetscape is part of the urban fabric of Halifax that you walk by now and don't take notice of," he said.

"It was appealed to this board and it was won. We just walk by it now and consider it part of downtown Halifax. It doesn't sweep people away from the sidewalk."

Outside the hearing room, Philip Pacey, with the Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia, said heritage activists believe the law is on their side. Pacey says the project doesn't follow a 2006 municipal policy that the new

building must be subordinate to the heritage property, and must keep original architectural features.

All but the facades of the heritage buildings will be stripped.

"We wished that it wasn't here (at the UARB)," he said in an interview.

"We feel that the sensible resolution to this is for a land exchange to occur between either the city or the province and Armour because there is all kinds of vacant land in downtown Halifax which would be very suitable for an office building. We don't have to destroy a block of heritage buildings in order to have an office development."

The hearing continues today.

metronews.ca

WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Video Stephen Harper calls Obama presidency a step forward in Canada-U.S. relations at metronews.ca/canada
Video Vancouver student named first torchbearer for 2010 Games at metronews.ca/canada
Blogs Political Stripes tackles Ignatieff's mixed messages on taxes



Lending to new immigrants given a boost by credit unions

Credit unions are now taking applications from immigrants starting or buying businesses — up to \$150,000 is available. For more information, visit nsco-opcouncil.ca or gov.ns.ca/econ. **METRO HALIFAX**

Americans abroad excited

Being away from home tough, but ex-pats thrilled for Obama's reign

JENNIFER TAPLIN
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Watching Barack Obama's inauguration on TV will be a little hard to swallow for some Americans living in Halifax.

Ryan Kerney, originally from New Jersey, said it will be tough being away from home during such an historic event in the United States.

"I have a lot of friends in (Washington) D.C. and I'll be calling them up," he said. "From what I've heard from them, it's been an amazing experience."

The biology researcher at Dalhousie University said he and his wife briefly considered heading to Washington to be a part of inauguration day, but it's just too far.

"I think it can't be over emphasized how big this is for the United States."

He said for the past eight years the global perception of his homeland has been "awful" and Barack Obama's presidency shines a new, positive light on it.

"It shows people in the U.S. are capable of electing an African-American president, which people didn't think would happen even

United States Presidential Inauguration

a couple years ago," Kerney said.

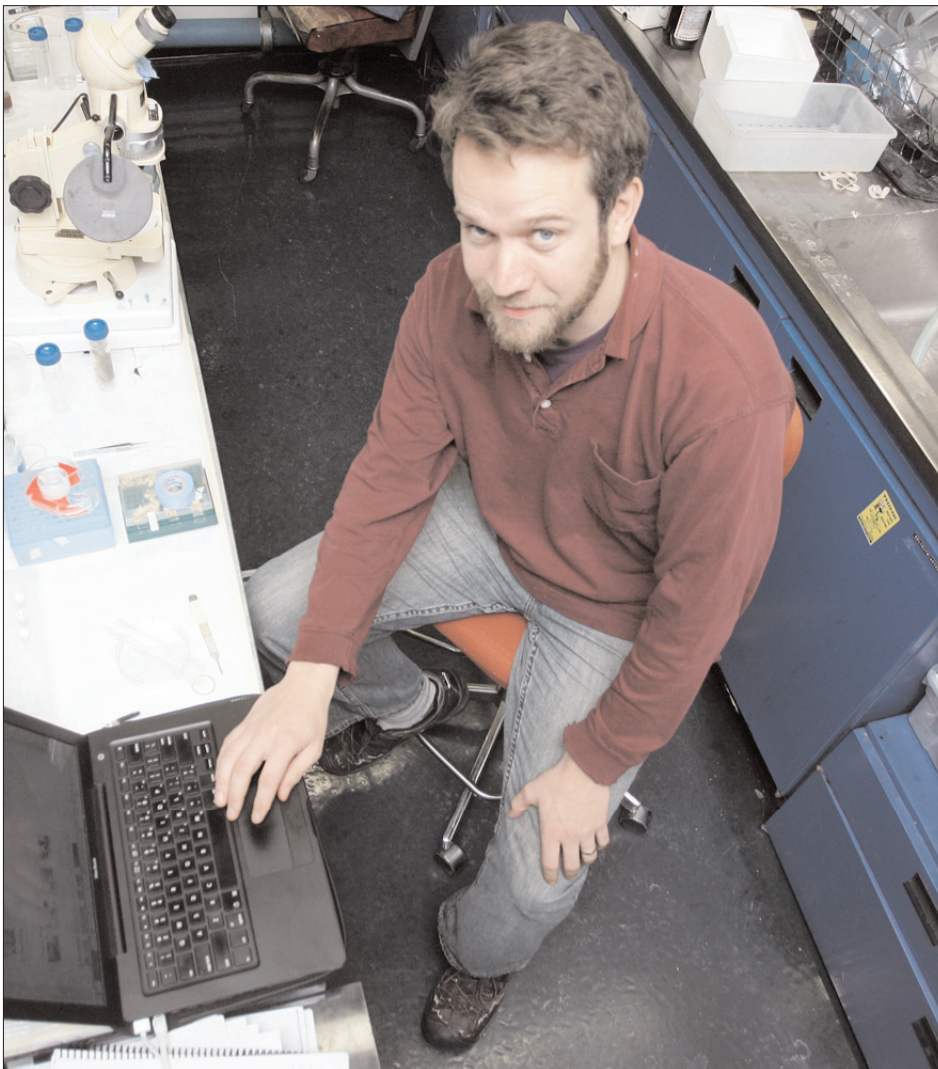
In many ways, the weight of the world is on Obama's shoulders and Kerney said it will be difficult for Obama to live up to it.

"One asset he'll have is wider public support for fixing things like the economy and, from a scientific point of view, the climate," Kerney said. "There's definitely a lot of excitement."

Jennifer Devitt, originally from Colorado, said the inauguration won't be as emotional for her as hearing the election results in November, but it's still an important event she'll watch over the Internet this morning.

"When I heard the election results ... I had tears running down my face," said Devitt, who has lived in Halifax for eight months. "It's hard to be here when momentous things are happening there."

She said she'll still be excited to see Obama sworn in, but it won't be as suspenseful as the election.



Ryan Kerney, a post-doctoral researcher at Dalhousie, is originally from New Jersey and will be watching Barack Obama's inauguration on his laptop today.

Tourist visits down, but revenue solid

ECONOMY Tourism was down three per cent by the end of November, which means about 66,000 fewer people visited Nova Scotia than by the end of November 2007. Hotels sold one per cent more room nights for most of 2008, though, so the industry matched the \$1.33-billion revenue reached last November.

Cruise-ship traffic was up 29 per cent in 2008 in Halifax, with 228,000 tourists coming through the Port of Halifax. In Sydney, it was up a whopping 107 per cent, bringing 76,000 visitors. Cruise-ship passengers are single-day visitors so they're not included in the province's visitor totals. **METRO HALIFAX**

Man charged in break-and-enter

CRIME A man was arrested for breaking into a downtown Dartmouth business early Sunday morning. The 31-year-old was also allegedly involved in a hostage-taking incident on Jan. 10 this year.

The man now faces a slew of charges, including breaking-and-entering, possession of a dangerous weapon, pointing a firearm and hostage taking.

PAUL MCLEOD/METRO HALIFAX

Dance troupe puts province on the map at inaugural ball

JENNIFER TAPLIN
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PERFORMANCE Don't be shocked if you see a couple Nova Scotia flags waving in the crowd during the inauguration today.

A troupe of seven dancers and drummers from the Maritime Centre for African Dance in Halifax were invited to perform at the African Inaugural Ball on Sunday night.

United States Presidential Inauguration

Their big finish involved bringing out more than a few Nova Scotia flags which they passed around to the dignitaries and guests.

Mufaro Chakabuda said it was an intense 17-minute performance and everybody was on their feet at the end.

"The energy and the reception was so welcoming. It was really good to put Nova Scotia on the map."

Mufaro Chakabuda of the Maritime Centre for African Dance

"People were coming closer and closer to the stage, so that was a good sign," she said in a phone interview yesterday. "The energy in the room was amazing."

Three drummers and four dancers from the Maritime Centre were invited to perform after they sent in an application and video.

"Honestly, it was one of

those things you don't believe until they tell you four or five times."

Unfortunately, the U.S. president-elect himself didn't make it to the ball because of his packed schedule in the last few days before inauguration.

"It was a big disappointment he wasn't there," Chakabuda said, adding it was an honour to meet the ambassadors, governors and other dignitaries who were there.

"The energy and the reception was so welcoming. It was really good to put Nova Scotia on the map and show Canada isn't just about Toronto."

Because of dance classes and other commitments, Chakabuda said she had to travel home yesterday and miss the big day, but some of the others will be able to stay.

"It's so wonderful to be included in this," she said yesterday.

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A Regina man who had been working on his tan when his tanning bed burst into flames escaped without major injuries. Jason Viles was inside the tanning bed yesterday morning when he heard a pop, smelled smoke and found himself locked in the bed. He escaped by kicking out a stereo and crawling out the back. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**

Canada



Deficit must be moderate: Iggy

Liberal Leader Michael Ignatieff, left, said yesterday that any deficits incurred in the upcoming budget must be temporary, but refused to put a dollar figure on what he would consider too large. Speaking after a caucus meeting yesterday, Ignatieff said Canadians are allergic to deficits and that any deficit in the budget set to be tabled Jan. 27 should be temporary, modest and moderate. **CBC NEWS ONLINE**



Vancouver resident Patricia Moreno, 18, became the first person selected to carry the 2010 Olympic torch yesterday.

First torch bearer named

FERNANDO CARNEIRO
Metro Canada

OLYMPICS A Vancouver teenager is the first person selected to carry the 2010 Olympic torch, the event's sponsor announced yesterday.

Patricia Moreno, 18, will be one of about 12,000 torchbearers chosen by a panel of experts assembled by Coca-Cola to carry the flame during its 106-day journey across Canada.

"I feel overwhelmed, there's so much to think about," Moreno said from Toronto where the an-

nouncement was made. "I feel more special every minute."

Kirsten Mihailides, a spokesperson for Coke, said Moreno was chosen because she is a "great example of Canadian youth."

"She's a volunteer, she leads an active lifestyle and she's a great ambassador for the torchbearer program," Mihailides said.

For information on how to become a torchbearer, visit icoke.ca



VIDEO Vancouver student named first torchbearer for 2010 Games at metronews.ca/canada

News in brief

PIPELINE Ottawa has offered financial support for a \$16.2-billion Arctic gas pipeline, the federal Environment minister said yesterday, aiming to revive a struggling proposal to tap vast northern reserves with industry conditions worsening.

WINNIPEG Two teens accused of planning a shooting rampage at three schools and a church appeared in a Winnipeg court yesterday, CBC News Online reports. A publication ban was quickly applied to the court proceedings, however, after the Crown attorney requested details be kept under wraps. A girl

and a boy, both 17, were arrested late last week and charged with four counts of conspiracy to commit murder, firearms offences and four counts of breaking and entering.

FIRE A family dog is being credited with saving a family during a blaze at a home near Rusagomis, N.B., early Sunday that ended up taking the animal's life, CBC News Online reports. The father and his sons, two and five years old, were sleeping in the basement of the home when they were awoken by the barking of the chocolate Labrador retriever. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

'Dirty oil' image will be challenge: Ambassador

United States

Presidential Inauguration

The increasing perception of Canada as both "foreign" and a "purveyor of dirty oil" is a challenge for the country with the new Obama administration, says Canada's ambassador to the United States.

On the eve of the inauguration of U.S. president-elect Barack Obama, Michael Wilson yesterday

Friends with benefits

• An expert panel that delivered a detailed blueprint to the Conservative government on how it should approach the

Obama administration says the key is to shelve the complaints and offer bold, "mutually beneficial" initiatives.

told a luncheon crowd it's something his embassy staff must work to change with White House officials and members of Congress.

It's relevant, he told the Canadian Club of Toronto, because Obama is committed to climate change and

working to "move away from oil — and especially foreign oil — to cleaner forms of energy."

Canada is the No. 1 energy exporter to the U.S., ahead of Saudi Arabia and Mexico.

"This image (of Canada)

is fed in part from negative perceptions of the Canadian oilsands industry," said Wilson, speaking at a downtown Toronto hotel. "But it also stems from a general under-appreciation in the United States of Canada's considerable efforts to reduce carbon emissions and to increase renewable energy production (as well as) a general under-appreciation of just how much our two economies are linked."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

B.C. partiers celebrate Dubya's departure

ANDREA WOO
for Metro Canada



VANCOUVER George Ultra Lounge will be holding a not-so-fond farewell party tonight for a certain like-named U.S. President on his way out of office.

David Hannay, owner of the Yaletown lounge, says the event, called Goodbye George by George, was — much like the exiting George W. Bush — a no-brainer.

"Obviously with the same

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names, we thought it was a natural match," he said. "Plus Bush has given so much comic fodder to so many people."

The lounge will be serving drinks named after the verbally challenged Texan, such as the Axis of Evil, the Hanging Chad and the Flying shoe. The Weapon of Mass Destruction will not

be available, as it was never found.

There will also be pretzels with choking hazards.

The official festivities are sold out, though the lounge will be open to the public afterward. It is expected that the club will be at capacity throughout the night.

"I've never seen as much U.S. political interest in Canada in my lifetime, right from Barack and Hillary duelling it out right up to this (inauguration)," said Hannay.

Pair pleads guilty to manslaughter in deaths of Mayerthorpe RCMP

VICTORIA HANDSIDES
Metro Canada



EDMONTON A gun that became part of cop-hater James Roszko's small arsenal in an ambush was wiped clean and put into a bag by two men accused of assisting him in the murder of four Mounties.

That was only one piece in mounting evidence from a court-agreed statement of facts that led to Shawn Hennessey, 29, and Dennis Cheeseman, 25, quietly admitting their part in the brutal 2005 quadruple-murder, sharing a bench in a jam-packed courtroom yesterday morning.

The pair pleaded guilty to four counts of manslaughter in the deaths of the officers, who were



Shawn Hennessey and his wife, Christine, enter Provincial Court in Edmonton yesterday morning. Hennessey and brother-in-law Dennis Cheeseman pleaded guilty to four counts of manslaughter in the deaths of four RCMP officers.

raiding Roszko's Mayerthorpe, Alta., area marijuana grow-op on March 3, 2005, before the gunman opened fire.

The brothers-in-law were initially charged with first-degree murder after their

arrests in July 2007, but agreed to plead to lesser charges.

"Obviously, they helped him," Cheeseman's long-time friend, Vicky Marsh told Metro exclusively after hearing news of the plea.

NDP will still try to topple Conservatives over budget

POLITICS NDP Leader Jack Layton is vowing to try and topple the minority Conservatives over next week's budget even as the Liberals — his partners in the opposition coalition — preach a wait-and-see attitude.

Layton said yesterday that only the NDP-Liberal coalition formed last year to replace the Tories can be trusted to implement the ideas needed to help Canada through the economic turmoil.

"It's a coalition that can help take Canada toward a better future. The coalition will only come into being if all of the opposition parties take the courageous stand to stand up to (Prime Minister Stephen) Harper at this critical time after all that he's done," Layton told a meeting of New Democrat MPs.

"If the Liberals decide to support Mr. Harper, I have to tell them, they should know this: They'll be doing it alone," he said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

"If the Liberals decide to support Mr. Harper ... they'll be doing it alone."

Jack Layton

Search called off for people missing after Costa Rica quake

Costa Rican authorities called off their search yesterday for victims of landslides from a deadly earthquake 11 days ago. Rescue teams have pulled 23 bodies from the Poas volcano region, where waves of earth buried cars and crushed homes during a 6.1 magnitude quake Jan. 8. Seven people are still missing. **REUTERS**

World



Church takes on 'mega brothels'

Church of England dioceses are to call for a government crackdown on human trafficking in the run-up to the London 2012 Olympics to prevent a repeat of the "mega brothels" set up in German cities for the 2006 World Cup. The church members pointed to the World Cup in Germany, where, they said, city officials adopted a "pragmatic" approach toward catering to the sexual desires of the estimated three million football fans who attended the tournament. **REUTERS**

Gaza Strip left devastated

Israeli forces continue retreat as Palestinians survey damage

More Israeli forces left the Gaza Strip yesterday after a 22-day assault on Hamas militants, and both sides kept a ceasefire, allowing dazed Palestinians to survey the destruction and mourn their dead.

In Jabalya refugee camp, the scene of heavy fighting, not a house was unscathed. Huge piles of uncollected garbage rotted on street corners. Children scavenged for empty plastic bottles.

Israeli sources said most troops would be out of Gaza by today — and that UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was expected to visit the same day.

A spokesman for Hamas's armed wing, his face masked by a chequered Arab scarf, vowed it would replenish its arsenal of rockets and other weapons, in defiance of any efforts to cut off smuggling routes.

"Do whatever you want, bringing in and manufacturing the holy weapons is our mission, and we know how to acquire weapons," the spokesman, Abu Ubaida, told a news conference.

Israel and Hamas separately declared ceasefires on Sunday, with Hamas de-



Palestinian boys stand atop an Israeli army rocket launcher left behind after Israeli forces left Beit Lahiya in the northern Gaza Strip yesterday. More Israeli forces left the Gaza Strip after a 22-day assault on Hamas militants, and both sides kept a ceasefire.

manding an Israeli pullout within a week.

Troops and tanks poured into Gaza on Jan. 3 to try to quell Hamas rocket attacks after a week-long Israeli air campaign.

A Hamas official said 5,000 homes, 16 government buildings and 20 mosques were destroyed

Arab leaders reconcile at summit

• Arab leaders have patched up their differences over the Israeli offensive against Gaza at a summit, Qatar's prime minister said. Disagreements

over the offensive showed a divide between Egypt, Saudi Arabia and their allies on one side, and Syria, Qatar and their allies on the other.

and 20,000 houses damaged. Israel has said militants used mosques as weapons depots. **REUTERS**

Slain Chechen girl's lawyer shot dead

MOSCOW A prominent lawyer who had opposed the early release of a Russian army officer convicted of murdering a Chechen girl was shot dead yesterday not far from the Kremlin, prosecutors said.

Stanislav Markelov acted for the family of 18-year-old Elza Kungayeva, whose murder in 2000 became a symbol of human rights abuses in the region.

Markelov, 34, had led attempts to block the early

release of Russian Col. Yuri Budanov, who was convicted of her murder. Protests arose last month when a court ruled Budanov should be released.

Markelov's body was found with several gunshot wounds on one of Moscow's main streets, prosecutors said. He had just given a briefing to reporters.

"The dead lawyer is Stanislav Markelov. His identity papers were found

Death threats

• Kungayeva's father told the Ekho Moskvy radio station that Markelov had received death threats on his mobile phone over the past few days.

so there is no further doubt about his identity," said a spokeswoman for the Moscow investigative unit of the prosecutor-gen-

eral's office.

Kungayeva's murder in 2000 provoked a storm of protest in Chechnya. Her family said she had been raped and murdered in a drunken rampage by Russian troops.

Budanov was arrested in 2000, charged with her murder and later jailed for 10 years, the highest-ranking Russian officer to be imprisoned for war crimes in Chechnya. He was freed early last Thursday. **REUTERS**

Recession raises risks for mothers, kids: WHO

HEALTH Global recession may lead many governments to reduce investment in basic health care, putting at risk the lives of vulnerable mothers and babies, the World Health Organization (WHO) said yesterday.

WHO director-general Margaret Chan said the world's economic woes could set back public health campaigns meant to eliminate diseases, tackle the root causes of poverty and save the lives of mothers and babies.

The crisis will also make more people use public health services instead of private ones, adding to the demands on stretched public services.

"The crisis comes at a fragile time for public

health ... Women and young children are among the first to be affected by a deterioration in financial circumstances and food availability," Chan told a meeting at the WHO's Geneva headquarters.

Chan raised concerns that "already vastly over-

"Women and young children are among the first to be affected by a deterioration in financial circumstances and food availability."

Margaret Chan

stretched and underfunded health systems will fail to detect and treat conditions such as cancer and heart disease that are increasingly common in

developing countries.

"In times of economic crisis, people tend to forego private care and make more use of publicly financed services," Chan said, warning that many people will neglect their health if they cannot access basic services. **REUTERS**

Guantanamo war-crimes court convenes amid chaos, confusion

TRIAL The Guantanamo war-crimes court convened in a chaotic session yesterday with accused 9-11 plotters disrupting the proceedings while lawyers debated whether an administrative hiccup had left them facing any charges at all.

Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the self-described mastermind of the 9-11 hijacked plane plot, tried unsuccessfully to banish all Americans from his defence table in the courtroom in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and complained when the judge asked him to limit his comments.

"This is terrorism, not

court. You don't give us opportunity to talk," Mohammed told the judge, Army Col. Stephen Henley.

The immediate question facing Guantanamo judges was whether the defendants still faced charges. The Bush administration appointee overseeing the tribunals quietly dropped charges in all the pending cases in December and re-filed them, a procedure aimed at updating juries that were assigned to the cases years ago.

Defence lawyers argued the move nullified all the previous rulings in the on-going cases. **REUTERS**

Activist carrying on King's teachings on nonviolence

ACTIVISM Bernard LaFayette, beaten and arrested 27 times during the civil rights movement, has spent his life working toward a goal the movement's leader Martin Luther King Jr. shared with him hours before he was killed.

"I devoted my life to fulfilling Martin Luther King's last request," said LaFayette, who said King

had been gearing up to take his teachings on non-violence around the world.

A minister and professor at Atlanta's Emory University, LaFayette estimates he has trained more than 20,000 in King's principles of nonviolence, including 3,000 Miami police officers and hundreds of inmates in one of Colombia's most violent prisons. **REUTERS**

News in brief

DISEASE Children in the U.S. increasingly are developing serious head and neck infections with a drug-resistant type of "superbug" bacteria called MRSA, U.S. researchers said. Rates of methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, or MRSA, are rising in children, and researchers called on doctors

to be more judicious in prescribing antibiotics. While only 12 per cent of staph infections in 2001 showed antibiotic resistance, that number more than doubled to 28 per cent in just five years.

SAO PAULO Rescuers sifted through wreckage of a sprawl-

ing evangelical church in Brazil's largest city whose roof collapsed yesterday, killing at least nine and injuring more than 100. The roof of the Reborn in Christ Church gave way during the evening service on Sunday.

BIRD FLU Chinese health

authorities said yesterday a 16-year-old boy in central Hunan province is badly ill after contracting the H5N1 birdflu virus, the third case reported in as many days. The boy came from Guizhou province, next to Hunan, and had recently been in contact with dead poultry, officials said. **REUTERS**

Sites like CNN.com and other major television networks are planning to offer streaming Internet video of the event, but warn that users could experience slower than normal responses from their websites because of increased traffic. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Presidential Inauguration



Lincoln Bible

The same Bible used by Abraham Lincoln, left, will be used by Barack Obama as he is sworn in by Supreme Court Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

• Morning worship service

Like every U.S. president-elect since Franklin D. Roosevelt, Barack Obama will tip off Inauguration Day with a morning worship service — most likely a private affair for him and his family and friends — at a church in D.C.

• Procession to the Capitol

U.S. President George W. Bush and his wife Laura Bush will join Obama and his wife, Michelle, for the motorcade procession to the Capitol — and undoubtedly fantastic conversation.

• Vice-president's swearing-in

Since he'll fade into the background the second the new administration



THE DAY'S EVENTS

takes its place, vice-president-elect Joe Biden gets the first turn being sworn into office on the steps of the Capitol.

• President's swearing-in, inaugural address

The main event is next up with Obama swearing the oath of office, then addressing

the country and affirming for one last time all the promises he's made.

• Departure of the outgoing president

In the second-most feel-good event of the day, Obama will escort Bush to his departure plane where Bush will take his final leave from D.C. And then we can all exhale.



• Inaugural parade

The city will go crazy as bands, floats and military personnel celebrate down Pennsylvania Avenue while Obama will watch from a secure post.

• Inaugural balls

Fabulous affairs with the crème de la crème of Washington society, great food and lavish decorations concludes inauguration day. Of course, this year that may be just a tad inappropriate since the U.S. is teetering on the edge of national bankruptcy.

Bye-bye Bush!

GRAHAM WOOD/METRO

10 facts to take to the bar ... U.S. presidents

1 George Washington's salary as president was \$25,000 US — George W. Bush's was \$400,000 US.



2 Theodore Roosevelt became the first president awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1906.

3 George W. Bush was the 43rd president, but there actually have only been 42 presidents: Cleveland was elected for two nonconsecutive terms and is counted twice, as the 22nd and 24th president.

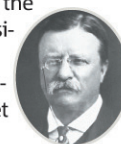
4 The oldest president ever elected was Ronald Reagan (1981-89). The 40th president took office at the age of 69.



5 Twenty-six presidents were lawyers before becoming president.

6 Andrew Jackson was the first president to survive an assassination attempt.

7 Theodore Roosevelt (1901-09) was the youngest president to ever serve. He was elected vice-president on a ticket with president William McKinley, but in September 1901 a deranged anarchist shot McKinley twice in Buffalo, New York, and Roosevelt assumed the top office at 42.



8 Bill Clinton was the first U.S. Democratic president to win re-election since Franklin D. Roosevelt.



9 The first and only president for a day was David Atchison. Zachary Taylor was a staunch Episcopalian and refused to be sworn in on a Sunday.

10 James Madison was president when the British entered Washington and set fire to the White House during the War of 1812.

\$50M

Amount D.C. Mayor Adrian Fenty predicts will be needed to cover costs associated with the inauguration. Congress has already approved \$15 million.

BY THE NUMBERS

2.5M

Number of people city officials expect in the city to celebrate inauguration festivities.

5,000

Number of portable toilets to be available to revelers on the National Mall.

22

Number of hours D.C.'s subway system will be running rush-hour service — from 4 a.m. to 2 a.m. — on Inauguration Day.

Network coverage

CBC and CBC Newsworld
• Starting at noon, Peter Mansbridge hosts inauguration coverage. Live coverage of the parade starts at 3 p.m.

CTV
• Lloyd Robertson hosts a live special starting at 11 a.m., with commentary from Frank McKenna and Eleanor Clift, former White House correspondent for Newsweek.

Global
• Kevin Newman quarterback's coverage with a live Global News special starting at noon.

U.S. networks
• All three main U.S. networks as well as CNN start airing live from Washington at 11 a.m. ABC has Dianne Sawyer, Charles Gibson and George Stephanopoulos hosting. CBS' coverage is helmed by Katie Couric. NBC's Brian Williams and Tom Brokaw lead their coverage, while MSNBC has Keith Olberman, Rachel Maddow. CNN has Wolf Blitzer and Anderson Cooper.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Address to focus on responsibility

Barack Obama's inauguration address will call on Americans to embrace a new era of responsible behaviour — in government and in business.

Obama's speech today will ask the country to reject the "culture of anything goes."

Obama will ask Ameri-

cans to restore a national value system that honours responsibility and accountability. It harkens back to John F. Kennedy's call for personal sacrifice in his 1960 inauguration address.

Obama wrote the bulk of the speech, press secretary Robert Gibbs said.

George W. Bush's 2005

"I don't think you're going to be surprised by what you hear."

David Axelrod, adviser

inaugural speech ran 21 minutes.

Obama's speech is ex-

pected to run about 15-20 minutes, according to ABC, which is on the short side compared to most inaugural addresses.

David Axelrod, Obama's senior adviser, said the speech would be consistent with the themes that Obama has emphasized throughout the campaign.

"I don't think you're going to be surprised by what you hear," he said. "I think he's going to talk about where we are as a country, but also who we are as a people and what responsibilities accrue to us as a result of that, and what we have to do to move forward." **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

Riding the wave of public approval a heavy burden to bear

RATINGS As Barack Obama takes the oath of office today, with one of the highest approval ratings in history, the weight of the nation's hope is on his shoulders.

It's not just an abstract hope, but often, a very personal one. His well-wishers feel a palpable tie to the presidency, in a way that has seldom been seen in a political system that has steadily declined in its citizens' confidence.

"I have a daughter who lost her job with Ford (Motor Company), and she's struggling," says Laura Clark of Dunbar, W.Va., one of America's poorer



The public was still able to get fairly close to the inauguration site yesterday during the Martin Luther King holiday celebrations.

states. "I just hope he'll create the conditions that will get her a job. I think he'll be able to do it be-

cause he's capable of bringing everyone together to accomplish the most important goals."

Clark is not alone in that wish. The shattered economy is on most people's minds. And Obama's image of steadiness, stability and reasoned optimism has captured their confidence, drawing record numbers to Washington for today's inauguration ceremony. According to a Gallup poll this week, a whopping 83 per cent approve the way he's handled his transition to authority, and 78 per cent view him favourably, one of the highest ratings the

opinion sampling company has recorded in recent decades. By comparison, only 17 per cent expect George W. Bush to be remembered as an above average president as he leaves office, and a scant 22 per cent say they approved of his eight-year term. For some, Obama symbolizes the hope for cleansing and renewal. For others, he is simply a welcome respite from eight long years.

But says Tawanda Wright of Chicago: "My biggest fear that his term won't be long enough. I think he needs at least 12 (years)."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Cellular providers prepare for the worst

Bell, Rogers and Telus have said they are expecting heavy cellular usage today, but reassured users it isn't likely to affect domestic operations. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Presidential Inauguration

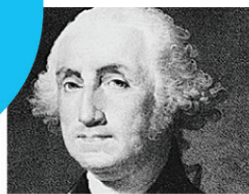
The good, the bad and the most unfortunate

History's unforgettable moments — and those not worth remembering

5 inaugurations you would have wanted to attend ...

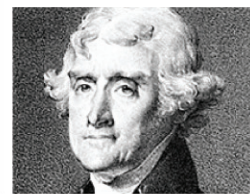
● **George Washington, 1789**

To see what a president should really look like: Washington wore white tights with silver shoe buckles and carried a steel-hilted sword.



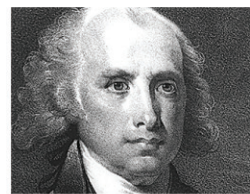
● **Thomas Jefferson, 1801**

To shake the president's hand: Jefferson broke precedent by mingling among spectators instead of riding in a carriage to his inauguration.



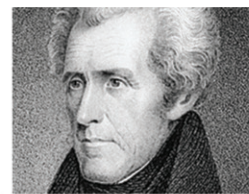
● **James Madison, 1809**

To get cheap tickets: Remember when \$4 would buy you a ticket to the inaugural ball? Well, maybe not, but that was the going rate for Madison's soiree. Today, it would cost an arm and a leg.



● **Andrew Jackson, 1829**

To get good gossip: After a particularly brutal campaign, outgoing president John Quincy Adams spitefully skipped out on the festivities.



● **Franklin Pierce, 1853**

To witness a presidential spurning: Pierce was the first of two presidents to "affirm" the oath of office instead of "swear" it, and he placed his hand on a law book instead of a Bible. **METRO**



... and five inaugurations you're glad you missed

● **Ulysses S. Grant, 1873**

Because who serves frozen food at an inaugural ball?: Grant's inauguration fell on the coldest March 4 on record. The building where the ball was held had no heat or insulation. The food froze on the tables.



● **William H. Taft, 1909**

Because you would have gotten stuck in a blizzard: The inauguration was forced indoors as winds toppled trees and telephone poles, trains stalled and streets were shut down. Crews cleared 58,000 tons of snow and slush.



● **Woodrow Wilson, 1913**

Because no one wanted to party: Grieving the loss of his son, the newly sworn-in president Wilson cancelled the inaugural ball because he felt it was inappropriate for what should be a solemn occasion.



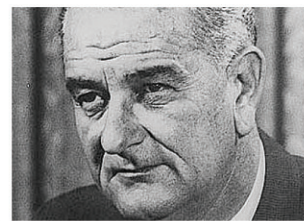
● **Herbert Hoover, 1929**

Because everyone was too poor to party: On the brink of the Great Depression, officials suspended the inaugural ball for a much more modest charity ball. Nothing like bread lines to kill the mood.



● **Lyndon B. Johnson, 1963**

Because you would have missed it anyway: After the assassination of John F. Kennedy, Johnson was administered the oath of office on an airplane. There were no ceremonies until he was officially elected in 1965. **METRO**



10 things you never knew ...

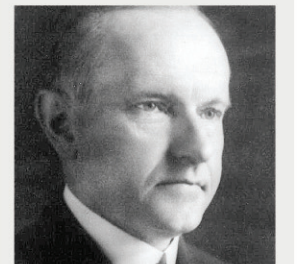
1 Franklin D. Roosevelt was the first president to be inaugurated on Jan. 20 in 1937. Before that, Inauguration Day was March 4.

2 George Washington delivered the shortest inauguration speech in history — at only 135 words — during his second inauguration in 1793.

3 James Buchanan's inauguration in 1857 was the first to be photographed.

4 African-Americans first marched in the inaugural parade at **Abraham Lincoln's** second swearing-in in 1865.

5 Women participated for the first time in an inaugural parade during **Woodrow Wilson's** second inauguration in 1917.



6 Calvin Coolidge was sworn in by former president William Taft, who had become the chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, in 1925.

7 John F. Kennedy was the first Catholic to become president.

8 Gerald Ford was the first unelected vice-president to become president.



9 Ronald Reagan's first inauguration was the warmest inauguration day on record. His second inauguration was the coldest.

10 Bill Clinton's inauguration was the first to be broadcast live on the Internet. **METRO**

SOURCE: JOINT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON INAUGURAL CEREMONIES



William H. Harrison

Dumbest president?

William H. Harrison wore no winter gear at all to his inauguration in 1841. He delivered the longest inauguration address on record in the cold and wet 9 C weather. A month later, he died of pneumonia. The illness is said to have been brought on by overexposure to the weather on his inauguration day. **METRO**

True words of wisdom



"No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the Invisible Hand which conducts the affairs of men more than those of the United States."
George Washington



"With malice toward none, with charity for all ... let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds."
Abraham Lincoln



"Ask not what your country can do for you — ask what you can do for your country."
John F. Kennedy

"The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

Franklin D. Roosevelt



"The tragic events of the 30 months of vital turmoil through which we have just passed have made us citizens of the world. There can be no turning back."
Woodrow Wilson

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Comment & Views

Comment

Obama: Reversing a spiral

NationalReport

Lawrence
Martin

Behold the lesson from the ones who are most remembered. To be an exceptional leader, you have to be an exceptional communicator. That's the Lincoln lesson, the Roosevelt lesson, the Kennedy lesson, the Reagan lesson and the Trudeau lesson.

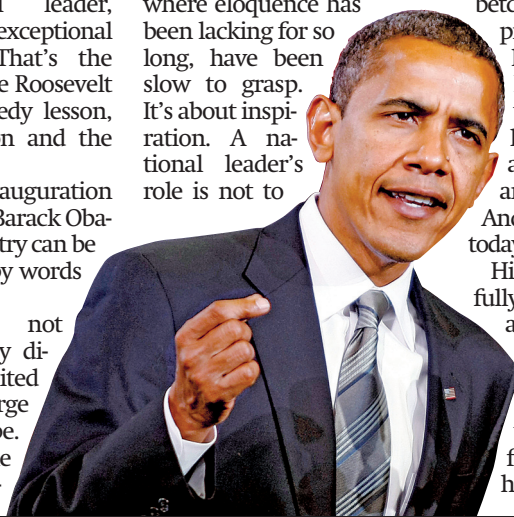
And today, inauguration day, it will be the Barack Obama lesson: A country can be moved as much by words as by deeds.

Obama may not change the policy direction of the United States to the large degree many hope. In recent weeks, he has sounded in-

creasingly moderate and mainstream. He appears to be seeking consensus rather than radical change.

His appointments are predominantly centrist types. His anti-war talk has dimmed. He's been all smiles around George W. Bush. He even declined an opportunity to repudiate the vile Dick Cheney.

But he's proving something that leaders in Canada, where eloquence has been lacking for so long, have been slow to grasp. It's about inspiration. A national leader's role is not to



United States Presidential Inauguration

be one of the boys. It is to project something higher than the mundane. It is to uplift the country's conscience.

George Junior's frat-boy talk was hardly suited for the greatest power on earth. Sarah Palin's low-brow "you betcha" schtick was OK at a pizza banquet for the local hockey team. But for a leader of the Western world, forget it. Take a hike George, Sarah, Dick and y'all. Visit a dictionary. Look up eloquence. And listen to Barack Obama today.

His historic oration, hopefully, will mark a turning away from a chapter in American history when it's been cool to be dense, when if you were seeking political office you were advised to hide your Ivy League edu-

cation. It's been a period — frequently referred to as the dumbing-down era — when to be erudite was decried as being elitist.

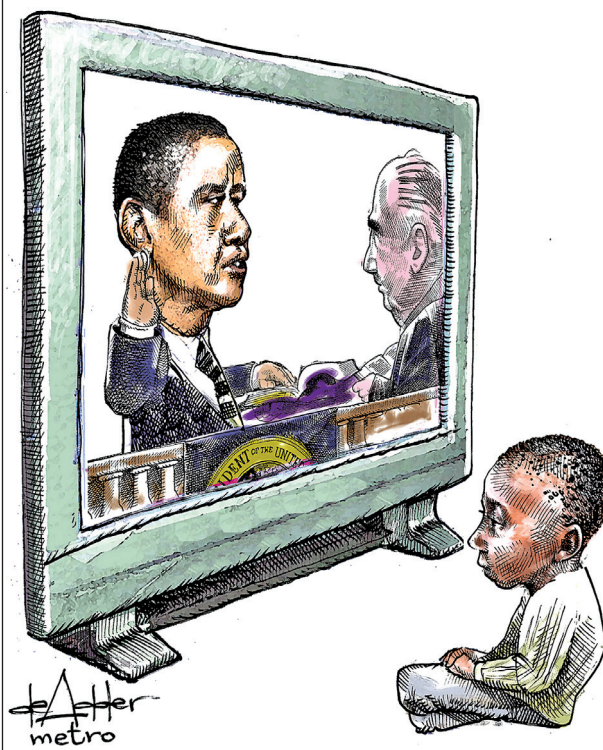
John F. Kennedy isn't remembered so much for what he did as for the style and the inspiration he brought. In the case of Pierre Trudeau, it's much the same. Each leader was seen as standing up for something higher. Each leader had his share of deficiencies, but Kennedy revitalized his country and so did, at least in his early years at the helm, Trudeau.

They weren't chasing after the lowest common denominator. They weren't mingling religion with politics. They weren't preying on people's base instincts.

That's the way down. Today, as the United States brings forward a beacon of inspiration, it's on the way to reversing that spiral.

Lawrence Martin is a Globe and Mail correspondent and author who writes about national affairs from Ottawa.

HISTORY



Letters

To stadium or not to stadium

Fred MacGillivray still bemoans the loss of the Commonwealth Games despite the facts from Vancouver, and the fact that Glasgow is sorry it won them.

This man is so out of touch with reality, he should start his statements with "once upon a time." He has a study that says a stadium even with a CFL franchise would be a financial burden on the HRM taxpayer, but he ignored his own facts and pushed for the Games, the stadium and the CFL team.

It's not hard to be a success in self-promotion when you are not called to task for questionable statements, have no worry about accountants looking under rocks, have access to seemingly unlimited taxpayer funds to back your ventures, and never have to justify where or how they were spent.

Fred and others like him could only exist in the world of government, where he is

never questioned, can muzzle a complete city council, avoid answering any and all questions, refuse public access to spending information — and is then rewarded with a platinum-lined parachute when he retires. His actions would have seen him fired from any financially responsible position in private business.

BRUCE DEVENNE, LOWER SACKVILLE

One peach of a guy for transit user and Metro reader

Just wanted to let you guys know that the gentleman you having distributing the Metro every morning at the Portland Hills bus terminal is wonderful!

Not only is he cheerful, polite and keen about his job, he is also a weather cop, helping all of us navigate the horrid conditions at the bus stop, taking our arm so we don't slip and making sure we are safely on the bus.

You are very lucky to have him, and I wanted you to know.

KELLY BARRETTE, EAST CHEZZETCOOK

Views

Middle East needs more Obama



Mona
Eltahawy

Global View

I live in Harlem, New York City, which on election night was the centre of the universe. I have never seen people so happy.

Four days later, I went to the Axis of Evil, or at least that's how former (doesn't it feel good to say that!) U.S. president George W. Bush described Syria. And there in the Damascus market I bought a T-shirt that said simply "Obama." One line in Arabic. Another in English.

Two very different cities. One simple joy at the mere idea of Obama.

Three months later, I am back in the Middle East and there is little joy. But Obama isn't the reason the region is heartsick and wary. Rather, it

is the absence of an Obama in the region that has sucked all joy out of it.

This morning in Doha, Qatar, the main photo on the front page of one of the national dailies was of Palestinians in Gaza lifting the decomposing body of a man onto the back of a pickup truck.

I am writing this from Tel Aviv, Israel, where at the airport an Israeli friend told me she is finally smiling again because with the ceasefire in place, she no longer has to worry her son will be sent to Gaza to fight. So, how do we become audaciously hopeful in the Mideast?

Forget our audaciously awful leaders — and when it comes to the Arab-Israeli con-

flict, they are evenly spread on both sides. Focus instead on young people, who form the majority in the region.

That's where U.S. President Barack Obama (doesn't it feel good to say that?) comes in.

The realist in me reminds the foolish optimist that Obama will be preoccupied with the U.S. economy and won't be as focused on the Middle East as those of us from the region would wish. The poor man, trim and fit physique notwithstanding, must be weighed down by a burden of expectations from everyone. But, he can be the leader the region lacks. He can be the leader that tells our young people — Arab, Israeli, Iranian and Kurdish, take your pick — "Yes you can!"

"The old leaders in the Middle East have stopped dreaming. That's a tragedy. Young people still dream."

Prof. Mira Tzoreff

A young Egyptian blogger I met in Doha told me that listening to Obama's acceptance speech, he felt he was listening to the late Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser, known for his mesmerizing presence. The latter died long before the blogger was born, but that's how far he must go back to point to an Arab leader with a charismatic ability to galvanize the public.

"The old leaders in the Middle East have stopped dreaming," Prof. Mira Tzoreff told me as she and her husband drove me to my hotel. "That's a tragedy. Young people still dream."

President Obama, you still dream. Talk to the young people here and tell them their dreams matter.

Mona Eltahawy is an award-winning Egyptian-born commentator and public speaker on Arab and Muslim issues. She reported on the Middle East for 10 years before moving to the U.S.

It's your turn to tell others what you think. E-mail your thoughts and opinions to: halifaxletters@metronews.ca


Letters must include sender's full name, address and phone number — street name and phone numbers will NOT be published. We reserve the right to edit letters.

Russia and Ukraine sign gas-supply deal

Russia and Ukraine signed a 10-year gas-supply deal yesterday, clearing the way to resume deliveries to Europe. Ukraine will buy Russian gas at a 20 per cent discount compared with European prices. The exact price was not disclosed. **REUTERS**

Business

EDITOR: FERMIN DESOUZA, FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

DOLLAR		
	C\$	79.70¢ US
	US\$	\$1.2547
	0.43¢	

OIL (London)	
	\$34.60 US
	\$1.91 (Feb contract)

Ottawa prods automakers for aid plans

AUTOS The Canadian arms of General Motors and Chrysler should “get a move on” and wrap up talks with Ottawa quickly on their restructuring plans because a “drop dead” date for agreeing on terms for government aid is fast approaching, Industry Minister Tony Clement said yesterday.

Clement said that Feb. 20 is the deadline for the automakers to come up with a comprehensive plan that would allow them to take part in the \$4-billion aid package to prop up the ailing industry. General Motors of Canada and Chrysler Canada have not yet taken advantage of the funds. Ford Motor Co. of Canada has not asked for assistance.

REUTERS

No relief for borrowers?

Banks argue lending risks cost them more

Chris McNeil says Canada's banks are making it tough for working folks to dig themselves out of debt.

The 34-year-old administrative assistant, who's struggling pay off his \$10,000 student loan, finds it “troubling” banks only cut their prime rates to 3.5 per cent from four per cent last month, even as the Bank of Canada slashed its rate by 75 basis points to 1.5 per cent. And he worries banks may hold back again today.

The Canadian Bankers Association has recently argued that banks' total costs of borrowing have not fallen as far as the Bank of Canada's rate. The overnight rate is just part of banks' total funding mix.

Some economists sug-

“Why do I have to pay? They created the problems. It was their lack of due diligence.”

Bank of Montreal customer Grant Clayton

gest consumers may not see substantial relief in borrowing costs soon. While most expect the Bank of Canada to cut its overnight rate again today, not everyone is convinced that commercial banks will pass on the full savings this time around.

Though the Bank of Canada is expected to cut its overnight rate by 50 basis points to one per cent today, Beata Caranci, direc-

tor of economic forecasting at TD Bank, stresses that is only one part of banks' total financing costs.

“From a risk valuation perspective, one would think that people and businesses are becoming a higher risk for the banks because the prospect of losing jobs is greater now than it was a couple months ago,” Caranci said.

Such explanations, however, have not quelled consumer anger. Bank of Montreal customer Grant Clayton, 64, was peeved the base rate on his line of credit was rising. “Why do I have to pay? They created the problems. It was their lack of due diligence,” Clayton said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Inauguration Merch mania



United States
Presidential Inauguration

A woman is pictured with U.S. president-elect Barack Obama merchandise yesterday as preparations continued for the inauguration at the U.S. Capitol in Washington.

The DAILY BUSINESS BUZZ

Ekistics opens new office: Urban planning firm Ekistics Planning & Design has opened a new office location in downtown Bangor, Maine, to meet the growing demand after the company was shortlisted to draft plans for downtown physical and economic revitalization initiatives across the state.

\$30M village put on hold: Falls Lake Resort Inc.'s planned \$30-million, 132-unit development agreement for Cottage Country has been put on hold after area residents protested, telling council the proposed recreation and retirement village will cause the area to fall victim to over development.

Fisheries meeting: Maritime fisheries ministers met in Charlotte-town on Friday and agreed to hold formal discussions, tentatively scheduled for February, with industry to devise strategies for prosperous and sustainable fisheries in the region.

Get the full stories delivered to your inbox every morning. Sign-up today for the **DAILY BUSINESS BUZZ** nsbj.ca

What Obama can do for Canada



Charles Davies

News Analysis

If his recent statements are any guide, U.S. president Barack Obama will boldly confront America's economic plight in his inaugural address today. He'll describe a crisis that is the worst since the Depression and caution that a revival will be measured in years rather than months. He'll stress the urgency of a stimulus package (roughly \$775 billion US, but potentially more than \$1 trillion US) and remind people that large, complex economies don't turn on a dime.

Canadians will listen as closely as Americans, since 80 per cent of our exports, and one in five of our jobs, depend on the U.S. economy. Anything Obama does to stimulate the U.S. economy will be good for us, but the measures will affect us in small doses over a long period, and there could be complications.

Anywhere from \$270 billion US to \$310 billion US of the Obama stimulus package will come from lower taxes for individuals (through reduced levies) and businesses (through

United States Presidential Inauguration

refunds on prior years' payments). If people spend the extra cash, that will benefit Canadian exporters of everything from cars to forest products. And if businesses use their refunds to expand and hire workers, that indirectly benefits us, too.

“Anything Obama does to stimulate the U.S. economy will be good for us, but the measures will affect us in small doses over a long period.”

But if individuals sock their refunds away — and recent numbers indicate Americans are scared enough that they are becoming savers once again — that money will have to be funneled through a newly risk-averse financial system before it has any effect. And if businesses use their refunds defensively — reducing debt in order to clean up their balance sheets — their prudence will actually slow a broad-

er recovery that would help Canada.

It's hard to see how plans to expand health and unemployment benefits or spending up to \$200 billion US helping states subsidize costs for Medicaid and education programs will do much for Canadian businesses, other than in very subtle and indirect ways. It's also an open question how much Canadians will benefit from Obama's broad but unspecified plans for infrastructure development. Under the North American Free Trade Agreement, Canadian companies can bid on U.S. public projects and so conceivably could win a share of the \$136 billion US of projects said to be “shovel-ready.”

Of course, NAFTA itself may be up for renegotiation if protectionist elements in the U.S., many of which supported Obama, get their way. Canadian officials are already concerned that increasing U.S. zeal to enforce border regulations will slow trade. Stimulus package or not, Canadians should get ready for a long and bumpy ride.

Charles Davies is a veteran business writer and editor who has worked for news organizations and publications including Business Week, Canadian Business, Report On Business magazine, Reuters, and Financial Post.

Consumers cautiously green

HOMES Demand for green products and services remains remarkably high in these tough economic times, but big-ticket items are proving a harder sell.

Homeowners who might have installed a geothermal or rooftop solar system a year ago are now more likely to hold off until the economy improves.

However, early adopters of green technologies are less affected by the sour economy because they

tend to have higher disposable income. The challenge arises from pushing the pricier technologies into the mainstream.

The head of one provider of geothermal systems was feeling confident because of the huge potential for growth, while green energy retailer Bullfrog says customers are willing to pay to make a statement against nuclear or coal-powered energy.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Foreigners sell off bonds and stocks

MARKETS Foreign investors shed Canadian securities in November, cutting bonds and stocks in favour of more liquid short-term assets, and Canadians continued to repatriate funds from abroad, Statistics Canada said.

Nonresidents reduced their Canadian portfolios by a net \$4.3 billion, more than expected, and fled the stock market, selling \$3 billion in equities, but placed \$4.1 billion in the short-term money market.

Meanwhile, Canadians divested \$2.6 billion in foreign securities. **REUTERS**

In brief

INVESTMENT The federal government announced a \$350-million investment in the Business Development Bank of Canada, which will allow it to provide an additional \$1.5 billion in financing to small- and medium-sized businesses.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

AUTOS Fiat and Chrysler are in talks to form a strategic partnership, which could lead to the Italian carmaker taking a stake in Chrysler. **REUTERS**

OIL Russia will likely become a member of OPEC soon, billionaire investor T. Boone Pickens predicted, noting it wouldn't be favourable for the U.S. **REUTERS**

Your Money

EDITOR: NINA DRAGICEVIC, NINA.DRAGICEVIC@METRONEWS.CA

Apply online: www.icicibank.ca

No income, no taxes, right?

Q Last November, I received a request from Revenue Canada to file a tax return for 2004-07. In 2003, I was laid off from work; the payout was generous and I decided to start my own business. Currently, my income is derived from investment dividends and interest. Profits from the business are insignificant. My total income is less than the basic personal exemption. Therefore, I would owe no taxes. Many of my colleagues agree: I do not have to file a tax return, unless I owe taxes! How do I get them off my back? **Ali**

A Your age or marriage status isn't very clear, but it must be a challenge to live on income that you describe. You're partially right: Individuals must file a tax return if taxes are owed. However, there are

MoneyMatters

Henry Choo Chong

choochonghcg@yahoo.ca

many other circumstances that obligate you to file:

- CRA has made a request. This obligates you to file.
- An individual has disposed of property. Although you receive investment income less than the basic personal exemption, if you sold real estate, stocks, or owned mutual funds, gains may exist.
- If your profits from the business exceed \$3,500, you may have a CPP obligation.
- Repayments of RRSP HBP or LLPs.
- Repayments of OAS or employment.

Reach Henry Choo Chong, CGA, at choochonghcg@yahoo.ca.

Words from the moneywise

SmartCookies



When we made the decision to get our financial lives in order, the first thing we did was spend hundreds of dollars on money guides. Sound crazy? It was. So to save you from this mistake, we've compiled a list of our favourites. Now of course, the No. 1 must-have is Smart Cookies' Guide to Making More Dough (wink, wink), but here are our top picks.

Andrea's Pick:
Suze Orman's 2009 Action Plan, by Suze Orman

Suze Orman is known for her no-nonsense smack-down style, and this book is no exception. Her 2009 Ac-

tion Plan is a simple, step-by-step guide on how to get back on track and into financial shape if you've fallen off the wagon due to the present economic disaster. Plus, it's half the price of a regular financial book in book stores.

Sandra's Pick:
Make Money Not Excuses, by Jean Chatzky

Prior to becoming Smart Cookies, we had excuse after excuse as to why we just couldn't save, invest, or make more dough. After reading this book we realized that A: We weren't alone (the author even shares her own money mistakes!), and that B: Confronting our money mishaps was the first step in reaching financial freedom. Plus, you'll love the simple solutions to your everyday money concerns.

Angela's Pick:
Smart Women Finish Rich, by David Bach

In the early days of our money group this was our guide (we even took part of the title to create our

name!) When reading this book, I started to think about my money not as a number in the bank or a source of stress but as a means to living my richest life (in all senses of the word.) It's a step-by-step guide to becoming a financially savvy and self-sufficient woman and every Smart Cookie should read Smart Women Finish Rich!

Katie's Pick:
Freakonomics, by Stephen Dubner and Steven Levitt

I am a sucker for a good storyteller. And a book that can analyze different socioeconomic phenomena in a humorous and engaging way will definitely earn my respect. Freakonomics examines what people will do to get what they want. And while it's not your typical financial how-to book, it does offer some great lessons on questioning the different financial incentives we encounter.

Robyn's Pick:
The Wealthy Barber, by

David Chilton

Although it's been 20 years since this book was first published, the core concepts continue to ring true. Chilton was certainly not the first to introduce the idea, however he certainly made it clear that paying yourself first is one of the fundamentals in living your richest life. As a book that has sold nearly three million copies, and is the best-selling Canadian book of all time, Chilton's concepts are definitely well respected within the financial field.

Tune in Monday nights at 10:30 p.m. EST/PST on the W Network and be sure to visit smartcookies.com for more tips.

Investing

Allan Small

What will get the market moving ahead in 2009? Read this week's column at metronews.ca

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Dempster out for WBC

Ryan Dempster has bowed out of Team Canada for the World Baseball Classic. Fellow Cubs teammate and B.C. native Rich Harden was named on the 45-man provisional roster released yesterday, but shoulder concerns could put his participation in doubt. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**



LeBron, Kobe toe to toe

LeBron James and the Cleveland Cavaliers visited Kobe Bryant and the Los Angeles Lakers last night for the first time this season. For a complete game recap, visit www.metronews.ca/sports.

JOHN.CHICK@METRONEWS.CA

Stransky named Q player of week

QMJHL Factoring in a four-game suspension, Jan Stransky has only spent two weeks in a Halifax Mooseheads jersey. Both weeks, he has earned QMJHL offensive player of the week. The 18-year-old right-winger earned the honour yesterday after scoring four goals and two assists on the weekend to help the Mooseheads earn a weekend split.

He has established a legitimate scoring unit, dubbed the Euro Line, with Tomas Knotek and Yuri Cheremetiev.

Stransky, who was acquired from Gatineau by former general manager Marcel Patenaude for a fifth-round draft pick, has seven goals and four assists in five games since the deal.

Travis Randell as a defence-man? Bobby Smith's rebuilding approach flawed? visit Matthew Wuest's Q Files blog at www.metronews.ca/qfiles.

Hollett on card for Alberta fight

MMA Fairview mixed martial artist Roger Hollett is scheduled to return to the cage on Feb. 20 in Edmonton.

Hollett (8-2) is on the card for Maximum Fighting Championship: 20 Destined for Greatness at the River Cree Resort and Casino, and will face UFC veteran David Heath (9-4).

Hollett, coming off a serious knee injury, lost his last match against Emanuel Newton on Dec. 5 at MFC 19. Newton (11-3-1) had previously beaten Heath on Sept. 26.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Flight issues alter Rainmen sked

MATTHEW WUEST
matthew.wuest@metronews.ca

Last-minute schedule changes were supposed to be a thing of the past for the Halifax Rainmen. Not so.

The Rainmen have changed their weekend itinerary, and will now play a road game against the Buffalo Stampede on Saturday at 7 p.m. instead of against the Detroit Panthers.

Their Sunday home game against the Stampede at 2 p.m. at the Metro Centre is still going ahead as planned.

The Rainmen hoped to be rid of such scheduling

changes after quitting the American Basketball Association and joining the Premier Basketball League, but owner Andre Levingston said it's not the same old story in a new league.

"It doesn't compare," he said. "Last year was an issue of a team not showing or trying to get another team in here for one reason or another. It's not that Detroit has organizational issues. Nor do we. It was just a flight issue, that's all."

The Rainmen couldn't get a flight back from Detroit in time for Sunday's game. Buffalo had earlier flights, so the PBL flipped the schedule and sent the August Groove to Detroit.

• Vermont Frost Heaves

general manager Michael Healey said Monday he won't be extending an offer to suspended Rainmen forward Eric Crookshank. The Frost Heaves made a big push to sign Crookshank in the off-season.

"As of right now, coach (Will Voigt) is happy with the team chemistry we have," Healey said.

On the Crookshank front, Levingston confirmed the suspension has nothing to do with the law or the public. He said despite receiving many calls and e-mails from fans, the exact reason for the suspension will remain internal.

He did add this: "Every organization has let him get away with anything he

wants because he's a basketball player. He has a false sense of, 'I can do what I want to do, when I want to do it, how I want to do it, and I if can't, I can say what I want without consequences.' That's not the real world. Am I going to be as bad as the other people and use this kid, as long as I get the results I want, to win a championship? That ain't right."

• Here's a statistical plus for the Rainmen: Rob Sanders leads the PBL with 48 rebounds. Here's a miss: Glen Dandridge has more three-point attempts (49) and misses (35) than anyone else in the PBL. He also has a league-high 30 turnovers.

NHL Big day for Ovechkin



Alex Ovechkin of the Washington Capitals celebrates his overtime goal against the New York Islanders with teammate Mike Green yesterday. Ovechkin scored both Washington goals in the 2-1 victory.

GETTY IMAGES

Raptors lose again

NBA RESULT

Raptors 84 Hawks 87



Joe Johnson hit the game-winner with 12.5 seconds left as the Atlanta Hawks edged the Toronto Raptors 87-84 in Atlanta.

Chris Bosh logged 22 points and 14 boards and Andrea Bargnani gave 20 and 10 for the Raptors, who have lost a season-high six straight games. Jamario Moon's three-pointer late in the game tied it up and Bosh's long jumper gave the Raptors an 80-78 lead with about four minutes left. Toronto squandered its next two possessions and then Johnson hit a jumper with Moon in his face to give the Hawks an 87-84 lead with 12.5 seconds left to play.

"For the most part we played pretty good," said Raptors head coach Jay Triano. "Our mental toughness has to get better."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

NHL SCOREBOARD

MONDAY'S RESULTS

Carolina 2 Toronto 0
Buffalo 3 Florida 2 (SO)
St. Louis 5 Boston 4 (SO)
Tampa Bay 4 Dallas 2
Washington 2 N.Y. Islanders 1 (OT)
Minnesota at Chicago
New Jersey at Nashville

NBA SCOREBOARD

MONDAY'S RESULTS

Atlanta 87 Toronto 84
Dallas 95 Philadelphia 93
Detroit 87 Memphis 79
Golden State 119 Washington 98
Houston 115 Denver 113
Minnesota 94 L.A. Clippers 86
New Orleans 103 Indiana 100
New York 102 Chicago 98
San Antonio 86 Charlotte 84
Boston 104 Phoenix 87
Milwaukee at Portland
Cleveland at L.A. Lakers

Pinball Clemons likely out as Toronto Argonauts CEO

Michael (Pinball) Clemons, arguably the most popular figure in Toronto's sports history, is likely out as the Argonauts' CEO, sources tell Metro.

Clemons, they say, might remain with the Argos in a front-office and/or ambassador capacity but his agent, **Gil Scott**, isn't sure.

"I really don't know what's going on with Pinball," Scott said. "I can't get a straight answer."

YorkReport

Marty York

marty.york@metronews.ca

Neither Clemons nor Argos co-owners **Howard Sokolowski** and **David Cynamon** could be reached by Metro yesterday. General manager **Adam Rita** was contacted at the Senior

Bowl in Alabama, where he is scouting, but his cell-phone disconnected after he was asked about Clemons and it went straight into voice mail the rest of the afternoon. While Clemons may be mulling over a non-executive offer from the Argos, the sources say ownership is close to hiring a new CEO.

Clemons, 44, became the Argos' head coach during the 2000 season after a playing career in Toronto that started in 1989 and landed

him in the Canadian Football Hall of Fame. He finished with a coaching record of 68-55-1 and led the Argos to the Grey Cup championship in 2004. He was appointed CEO before the 2008 season and hired his defensive co-ordinator, **Rich Stubler**, as his head coaching successor. He also was responsible for trading for quarterback **Kerry Joseph**, who was chosen the CFL's top player with the Saskatchewan Roughriders in 2007. Both Stubler and

Joseph flopped. Clemons fired Stubler in mid-season and replaced him with **Don Matthews**, who went 0-8.

Last week, when the Argos hired ex-NFL assistant **Bart Andrus**, Clemons wasn't consulted and didn't attend the news conference to introduce the new head coach.

• One of Canada's premier sports columnists is retiring early. **William Houston**, whose Truth and Rumours became must-read material after it launched in 1991, has accepted a buyout

from The Globe and Mail and will write his final column next month.

"Bill ripped me a lot early in my career, but he made me better," CBC sports reporter **Elliotte Friedman** said. "He was fair."

From ex-TSN and Sportsnet anchor **Jim Van Horne**: "He made the media look over their shoulders and forced them to be honest."

Marty York has been a groundbreaking sports columnist and broadcaster in Canada for decades.



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Health & Beauty

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE COLACINO, ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

Estrogen in your moisturizer?

CELIA MILNE
for Metro Canada



Moisturizers — particularly ones that “re-junevate” your skin — may contain estrogen without mentioning it in the ingredient list. This was the conclusion of a small study in the U.S.

For the study, 16 moisturizers were analyzed in a laboratory to see if they contained estrogen. The creams were all commonly available, and ranged in price from \$10 to \$100. Six of them contained measurable levels of estrogen. Yet none listed estrogenic hormones on the label.

This means that women may be exposing themselves to small amounts of estrogen without knowing it.

The leader of the study was Dr. Adrienne Olson, a

doctor of pharmacy and a survivor of a type of breast cancer called estrogen-receptor positive breast cancer, which is exacerbated by higher levels of estrogen in the body. She wondered during her own breast cancer treatment if she and other women might be dousing themselves daily with extra estrogen through their moisturizers.

She suspected that products promoting a youthful appearance might contain estrogen.

Olson, a volunteer for Breastlink in Long Beach, Calif., collected the 16 samples and sent them to a research laboratory where they were analyzed for the presence of estradiol, estrone and estrinol.

Her collaborators in the study were Dr. John Link (MD) and Dr. Tom Kupiec (PhD) of Analytical Research Laboratories in Oklahoma

City, Okla.

One of the products was found to contain estrone and five of them contained estrinol.

Other products may contain lower levels of estrogen not detected in this test, said Olson.

It is not clear whether skin exposure to estrogens has an influence on ER-positive breast cancer, but Olson errs on the safe side.

“As an ER-positive breast cancer survivor, I am now choosing to use baby oil — until further data is available,” she told Metro in an e-mail message.

Olson presented her study at the San Antonio Breast Cancer Symposium in late

2008. She did not give out brand names of estrogen-containing products because companies frequently

change their formulas.

The main purpose of the study was to encourage the cosmetics industry to produce moisturizers free of estrogen and label them as such. Right now, she said, government monitoring of ingredients in these products is spotty and inconsistent.

Olson also hopes that moisturizers will be further scrutinized by experts. “We need others in the scientific community and the USFDA to repeat and expand upon these numbers,” she said.



ISTOCK PHOTO

In a recent U.S. study of 16 moisturizers, six of them contained measurable levels of estrogen. Yet none listed the hormones on the label.

Author looks at mind-body link to weight gain

BOOK Author Stacey Grieve offers a different look at weight-loss with her newest book, *Why Are You Weighting?*, which is set to launch today.

The book discusses the mind-body connection that comes with weight loss and offers readers a new method to lose those

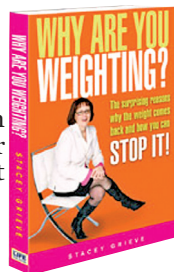
unwanted pounds and keep them off.

Grieve writes about how our bodies are pre-programmed to gain the lost weight back, but with her system this can be reprogrammed with no pain and deprivation.

Why Are You Weighting? is based on her own

experiences as she struggled with weight loss in the past. Growing up overweight, she tried many diets over a 20-year period. To her dismay, none of them kept their results and after six to 12 months she'd end up weighing more than before the diet started.

Her book is on sale at her website at whyareyouweighting-book.com for \$21.95.



JOSEPHINE LIM/
FOR METRO CANADA

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JENNIFER MASSEAU
for Metro Canada

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Lancôme Paris Primordiale Lip Skin Recharge, 15 mL, \$43

For silky soft lips, this perfume-free age-fighting balm reduces fine lines and delivers smoother texture on the lips and contour area with antioxidant botanical vitamin E and Gatuline, a gentle exfoliator. It also doubles as a lipstick primer. At drug and department stores; lancome.ca.



Clarins Extra Firming Lip and Contour Balm, 15 mL, \$45

This lush-textured balm gives a shiny finish and nourishes sensitive lips with cold-pressed raspberry seed oil, which is rich in essential fatty acids and vitamin E to promote cellular renewal. At drug & department stores; clarins.ca.



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- If a fever exceeds 102°, see your doctor immediately.

Eat Smart

- Eat a balanced diet containing the minimum daily requirements of vitamins and minerals.

Your doctor and Medicine Shoppe Pharmacist can help you devise a good nutrition strategy for yourself and family.

Reduce Stress

- Exercise for at least half an hour daily to stay fit, thereby helping to ward off sickness.
- Each day, relax with a cup of low-fat soup or caffeine-free herbal tea; besides being a good source of nutrition, each is a well-deserved timeout.

For more cough and cold tips, consult your doctor and Medicine Shoppe Pharmacist. We're always glad to help.



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The first step to a healthy weight loss

Part 5

Triolax, why it's the best internal cleansing program

Who can use a Detox program?

Anyone having reached puberty. In brief, anyone wanting to stay in shape or that desires a healthy and top notch organism.

Triolax and weight loss?

Over the years we have had reports from consumers of weight loss while taking Triolax. Testimonies have proved an average weight loss of 2-9 lbs in a 2 week time frame.

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Triolax should logically be the first step before starting a weight loss program.

Are there counter-indications?

Each of the 3 products in the Triolax program have obtained their natural product number from Health Canada therefore, have a complete nomenclature listing when it comes to the products' precautions and indications. However, pregnant or breastfeeding women should not take this product nor people suffering with Crohns disease.

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Intelligence linked to sperm count

The J Spot

Josey Vogels

Sex talk with Josey



A recent study showed that men who scored higher on an intelligence test had more sperm per milliliter.

You may think it's the potential for brilliant conversation that makes intelligence such an attractive trait in a man but it may be that his intellect is a sign of something else: According to researchers, smart guys have higher sperm counts.

The researchers at King's College London, the University of Delaware and the University of New Mexico compared results from intelligence tests given to 425 guys aged 31 to 44. The men also provided sperm samples and upon analysis, the researchers found the men who scored higher on the intelligence test not only had more sperm per milliliter, but their sperm were also better swimmers.

Previous theories believed that highly intelligent men might score less stressful jobs and make better lifestyle choices, resulting in better health and healthier sperm. But, according to the researchers in this study, even the smart guys with poor health had higher sperm counts, causing them to speculate that indicators of intelligence and good sperm may ride in on the same gene float.

But before all you less-than-brilliant lads get

down on your little swimmers, take heart in the fact that semen has some other neat tricks up its sleeve besides delivering super sperm. For example, there is evidence that semen can make a girl happy, and not in ways you might think.

Researchers have found that women who regularly had unprotected sex with their partner were less depressed than women who regularly used a condom. Having ruled out other explanations, they think this is because mood-altering hormones in semen are absorbed through the vagina.

Of course, before you go having unprotected sex as a mood enhancer, it goes without saying that an unwanted pregnancy or an STD would no doubt put a damper on your natural

high. And while the health and vitality of a man's sperm may be a going concern (especially if he's trying to have kids), seminal fluid is much more than a spermatozoa carrier.

According to the researchers in this study, even the smart guys with poor health had higher sperm counts.

In fact, sperm makes up only about one per cent of its contents. The rest is a complex mix of over 300 components, among them proteins, enzymes, zinc, and fructose and changes in colour, smell, taste or texture may be indicators of health problems, such as prostate infection or other plumbing problems.

So, even if your little tadpoles aren't the best swimmers, it's still important to monitor the quality of the pool water.

Josey Vogels is a sex and relationship columnist and author of five books on the subjects. For more info, visit joseyvogels.com.



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Serve 'em up, George

Settling into his 15-month stint in a north London prison, Boy George has already landed a job behind bars. The flamboyant singer — who was convicted of falsely imprisoning a male escort — is working in the prison canteen serving food to other inmates, according to South Africa's News 24. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

15

Entertainment

EDITOR: DEAN LISK, DEAN.LISK@METRONOVS.CA

**And the winner isn't...**

Katy Perry was accidentally presented with the best international song award at France's NRJ Awards in Cannes. The award should have been presented to Rihanna, the BBC reports.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

How did the men of Tatamagouche fare?

North-shore town's Week the Women Went experience debuts tomorrow night on CBC

JON TATTRE
for Metro Canada

When the women left Tatamagouche, N.S., Jimmy LeFresne watched with foreboding. "Once the buses were gone, it was silence, like a void. There was no jumping for joy. Then it kicked in: 'They're gone, so now what?'"

LeFresne, 50, owns the north-shore town's Train Station Inn; he's also the elected councillor. When CBC TV's *The Week the Women Went* whisked the sleepy community's ladies away to a luxury hotel, they took his staff with them.

On TV

• Season 2 of *The Week the Women Went* starts at 8 p.m. tomorrow on CBC-TV.

"I had to tell the men of the community, 'I need help here!'" he laughs. "I had another councillor come over, I had the local RCMP cooking meals. It was quite something. Some coped very well and some ... struggled, we'll say."

Like many in the 700-person town, LeFresne had a microphone on at all hours. "You tried to be on your best behaviour, but

there are times when things just fall about. All of a sudden, you've done something and you think, 'Oh my land, it's on film.'"

He hopes the program will show people Tatamagouche is not the dying East Coast community of stereotypes.

"We're far from that. If a wrench is thrown into the mix, we deal with it," he said. "If you talk to anybody in our community, we don't think it's a slow pace, because we're going full-tilt all the time."

Asked how he thought a *Week the Men Went* would go, LeFresne burst out laughing. "I think (the

women) would notice. There's two sides to the story."

Cal Shumiatcher, the executive producer, says he wanted a "romantic" location in the Maritimes.

"Tata just shone — we had so much fun," he explains from his Vancouver office. "It's wonderful when people open up their lives and show you what they're about."

High winds from the first of two storms to hit the womanless town during filming threatened to cancel the iconic shot of the women rolling their suitcases down main street.



The women of Tatamagouche, N.S. brave a storm as they leave town for a week of pampering.

"That's what I love about this kind of television: You take something that's real adversity and it becomes part of the show," Shumiatcher said. "Like typical Tatas, it didn't bother them a bit."

Mariah Carey goes from Glitter to grim at Sundance film festival

FILM Singer Mariah Carey has taken a break from pop stardom to act in new movie *Push*, but far from her lead role in semi-autobiographical *Glitter*, Carey has opted for a supporting part in this often grim tale.

In fact, the real star of *Push*, which debuted this past weekend at Sundance, is an unknown actress from Harlem, Gabourey Sidibe, playing an obese and overburdened 16-year-old named Precious Jones who is twice impregnated by her father and is beaten by her mother.

Yet, she also has adults who look out for her, and one of those is welfare case worker, Mrs. Weiss, played by Carey.

With her stringy hair and no nonsense attitude, Mrs. Weiss is far from the glamorous role Carey took



Mariah Carey and husband Nick Cannon attend a party for the film *Push* at Sundance.

in 2001's *Glitter*, which was loosely based on her own rise to pop music stardom.

But that movie was panned by critics and earned only \$5.3 million US at global box offices.

Since then, Carey has starred in a few movies, but for the most part they have been seen only on TV, DVD or outside the United States.

Push, however, is based on a best-selling novel and directed by Lee Daniels who produced *Monster's Ball*, which earned Halle Berry a best actress Oscar. So curiosity was running high at Sundance to see how Carey performed.

At least one early review was positive. Show business paper *Daily Variety* called *Push* "courageous and uncompromising," and added that "among the many delightful surprises in the film is Mariah Carey, who is pitch-perfect as a welfare counselor and serves as this demi-tragedy's Greek chorus."

REUTERS

Cruise says he 'always wanted to kill Hitler'

FILM Tom Cruise, who fails to assassinate Adolf Hitler in his new movie *Valkyrie*, said he grew up wanting to kill the Nazi leader.

In the Second World War thriller based on a true story of the unsuccessful attempt by German soldiers to kill Hitler, Cruise plays an officer who plants a

bomb at Hitler's military headquarters.

"I always wanted to kill Hitler, I hated him," the star said during a visit to Seoul to promote his latest film. "As a child studying history and looking at documents, I wondered, 'Why didn't someone stand up and try to stop it?'"

REUTERS



Tom Cruise promotes *Valkyrie* in Seoul, South Korea.



By Norm Foster

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Christina Aguilera and husband Jordan Bratman threw a Where the Wild Things Are-themed party Saturday afternoon to celebrate the first birthday of son Max, who turned one last week. **PEOPLE.COM**

Nickel Eye's solo Strokes

Bass player mines eye-opening roadtrip on new album

BRYAN BORZYKOWSKI
for Metro Canada



Nikolai Fraiture has come a long way since he dropped out of college at 19 to travel, Jack Kerouac style, across America. But on The Strokes bassist's debut album he decided to venture back 11 years and mine those heady days for material.

"It was a very interesting time," says Fraiture, who plays under the name Nickel Eye when he's not slapping bass strings with his other band. "It was not what I expected from my young, ideal dreams; I was pretty disillusioned."

Although the trip was more than a decade ago, Fraiture managed to find his old notebooks filled

with his writings. "They were in a shoebox," he says. "I went through them for inspiration and the majority of words came from that."

While he might have had the lyrical foundation for his tunes, writing music on his own for the first time was an eye-opening experience.

Until penning tracks for his new record, *The Time of the Assassins*, he'd only concentrate on adding bass to The Strokes' songs. Now he was forced to look at the big picture.

"This experience really helped me understand what everyone else is doing," he explains. "Before, I could push my part at the sake of a song. But I've learned different things and I see them from a dif-

ferent point of view now."

Fraiture admits that his new disc is a "challenging listen all around," but in reality it's not too far off from what a toned down Strokes album might sound like. His voice is oddly similar to Julian Casablancas', though he mumbles a lot more and the music is nearly as infectious and passionate — minus the distortion — as his other group's tunes.

So, if the music's not that far off from what he plays in his day job, why's he releasing his own batch of tunes? "We had a lot of time off with The Strokes," he says. (The fivesome's last album was released in 2006.) "And I couldn't wait around any longer."

After a year and a half of writing he found himself

with an album. But after all that work, it's unlikely the New York-based musician will have a lot of time to promote his labour of love — The Strokes are finally going back into the studio in February.

Nickel Eye's not upset though, for him The Strokes is still his top priority. "I can't speak for everyone, but for me, I definitely want to be in this band. When you're on tour for so long everything becomes the same. We just needed to regroup. That's all."

So, then when might the masses see Fraiture play beyond a few January dates? He has no idea. "If things go quickly in the studio then maybe we can take a break. It depends how things unfold."



The Time of the Assassins, the debut solo disc from Strokes bassist Nikolai Fraiture will be available in stores and online next week.

Jonas Brothers get fab TV gig

TELEVISION Could the Jonas Brothers become the next Beatles? Or merely the new Monkees?

The chart-topping teen idols, who elicit piercing shrieks from their young fans wherever they go, are starring in a Disney Channel series inspired by the Beatles' movies as well as the zany American made-for-TV group the Monkees.

The Jonas siblings — Kevin, 21, Joe, 19, and Nick, 16 — will appear as themselves in the barely fictional comedy series *Jonas*, premiering on the cable channel in May.

The squeaky clean brothers, beloved by the young daughters of President-elect Barack Obama, play



The Jonas Brothers.

members of a popular band trying to live normal lives at a regular school, despite being trailed by throngs of ardent fans.

Described as a fusion of situation comedy and mu-

sic video, the show also features hitherto unknown brother Frankie, 8, (known as the "bonus Jonas") playing their younger brother.

The TV show originally was envisioned as a spy series, but producers said last week the concept was changed as the Jonas Brothers became a global teen phenomenon over the past 12 months.

"It's hard not to make parallel comparisons to the Beatles in 1962 and 1963 when you see the kind of response that the Jonas Brothers' fans have to them. It's a force of nature," executive producer Roger Schulman told reporters at a preview.

REUTERS



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